

**Combined Federal Civilian Agencies Household
Goods Relocation and Freight Committee
Crystal Mall 3 – Room C-43
February 6, 2003**

WELCOME: Charlie Hill, Deputy Director, Household Goods Relocation Committee

Charlie welcomed the committee and encouraged input from all members.

Tauna Delmonico, Director, GSA Travel and Transportation Management Division, reemphasized the importance of participation. The agencies requested that GSA policy representatives (holding a decision making position) attend the meetings. Many changes have been happening including the development of TMSS. We are considering all comments and need agency feedback to develop a great product.

Tauna presented Les Oden, Department of Interior, with a certificate of appreciation for his active participation. Les encouraged everyone to speak up on any issues.

KANSAS CITY ISSUES: Kim Chancellor, GSA Heartland Region, phone: (816) 823-3646

International Value Index

GSA had difficulty calculating International Value Indexes (VI) due to international discounts. Surface discounts may be as high as 1000% and therefore VI cannot be calculated using the same method as domestic shipments. Therefore, to calculate VI, an average cost was used instead of a percentage.

At the time of the committee meeting, the International Value Index was not displayed on ITMS. A committee member requested to have this implemented as soon as possible.

As of February 10, 2003, the Value Index is now being displayed and calculated on ITMS for international and intra state Alaskan cost comparisons. If you have any questions on the calculation, please contact GSA at (816) 823-3646.

This information was disseminated via GSA's ListServ and posted to GSA's What's New website. If you are interested in subscribing, please see page 2 (Transportation ListServ) for subscription information.

Increase to International Rate Table and Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB) Table

GSA proposed to raise the baseline tables so discount amounts are not extremely high (i.e. a current 150% discount may only need to be set at 80% if the baseline tables are raised). The new baselines would be determined by the Consumer Price Index and coordinated with Terry Head (Household Goods Forwarders Association).

The committee concurred to have the International Rate Table and UAB Table raised.

Increase to 415G Tariff

American Moving and Storage Association (AMSA) has proposed a 2.5% general increase to the 415G tariff (measured by the consumer price index). A chart illustrated the increases to the government tariff compared to inflation.

1999 – increase due to the Industrial Funding Fee increase

2001 – increase due to effects of September 11, 2001

If this current increase is accepted, it would take effect May 1, 2003.

The last increase was 3% and took effect May 2002. Historically increases are on an annual basis.

Question: Are fuel costs factored in?

Answer: Fuel costs are a separate line item.

Questions: Why does the baseline table have to be increased when a discount is still being received? Why don't the carriers just adjust their discount? A change to the baseline table would increase the cost of the commuted rate.

Answer: The commuted rate is calculated based on the commercial tables in the commercial tariff. Baseline tables need to be increased to incorporate insurance increases.

Vote: Increase 415G tariff effective May 1

Concur: One vote

Nonconcur: The rest of the committee was opposed. Kim will inform Kansas City and industry of the committee's concerns. Kansas City will interface with AMSA to resolve.

Transportation ListServ

GSA will no longer distribute information to customers via mail. Information will be emailed via the GSA ListServ and posted to GSA's What's New website. To subscribe to the ListServ, click on <http://www.kc.gsa.gov/fsstt/whatsnew.htm>. Agencies/TSPs may specify information they wish to receive (i.e. household goods, freight or both). If an agency does not have email access, contact GSA (816 823-3646 or reg6.transportation@gsa.gov).

The next Request for Offers will be posted June 2003. If you have any changes, please inform GSA no later than the next quarterly meeting scheduled for May 2003.

GUEST SPEAKER: Clayton Boyce, Editor-in-Chief, Traffic World

Mr. Boyce discussed the trend of freight payment and auditing companies going bankrupt. These companies receive advance shipment payments, conduct audits and then pay the carriers the appropriate amount. The payment companies earn money by investing the float. However as interest rates fell, many companies no longer earned money and in fact could not pay the carrier bills. Eventually, these payment companies filed for bankruptcy and the shippers were still liable for paying the carrier.

One auditing company earned money for carriers by discovering items that should have charged for (i.e. interest charges). Often companies paid the bills without consulting a lawyer. A complaint was filed against this auditing company since shippers cannot be forced to pay bills.

Question: What do you foresee as the greatest challenge for transportation?

Answer: The greatest challenge for transportation is meeting Homeland Security regulations. Security surcharges are being implemented and will be passed onto the customer.

For more information about Traffic World, the website is: <http://www.trafficworld.com>.

ASTRAY FREIGHT: Felicia Rogers, GSA Southeast Sunbelt Region, phone: (404) 331-3002

The Government Cargo and Recovery Effort (GOCARE) committee is comprised of transportation officers whose purpose is recovery and return of U.S. Government astray freight. The members are responsible for all commercial carrier freight terminals/warehouses (all modes) within certain geographical locations. The GSA GOCARE coordinator is Jim Stroup (1-800-488-3111 X66015 or jim.stroup@gsa.gov)

AUDITS: Jim Fitzgerald, GSA Audits Division, email: james.fitzgerald@gsa.gov

Jim clarified Clayton Boyce's presentation. The undercharge issue no longer affects the government and is primarily a commercial issue now. However, it is always good to question and research any bills that appear odd.

Jim mentioned the recent 9th Carrier Conference. The purpose is to increase communications with Transportation Service Providers.

Pre-payment audit is working well. Some small agencies still need to be brought on-line. For low volume agencies, GSA Audits will conduct their audits (vice choosing one from schedules) to save costs.

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES SOLUTION (TMSS): Donna Graige, GSA Travel Programs Branch, phone (303) 236-7440

GSA has been actively developing TMSS. One team has been incorporating the requirements from our current transportation system, Interagency Transportation Management System (ITMS) and transferring them into TMSS. At the same time another team is developing enhancements to TMSS. The On-line Booking Module has recently been completed and sent to the programmers. The Bill of Lading Module is currently being developed.

It has not been decided if PowerTrack will be used for the payment module of TMSS.

If agencies/TSPs would like to be added to the list of volunteers who provide comments on the developing TMSS modules, please contact one of the below:

Lynn Ju, lynnette.ju@gsa.gov, 703 305-7060

Mary Anne Sykes, maryanne.sykes@gsa.gov, 703 305-7061

Donna Graige, donna.graige@gsa.gov, 303 236-7440

No decision has been made yet on the format for the paper copy Bill of Lading. GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy is coordinating the effort with carrier associations to ensure compliance. A representative from OGP attended the committee meeting and noted agencies concerns with the Bill of Lading.

Jim Fitzgerald mentioned that finance centers will pay a bill of lading as long as an SF 1113 is attached.

It was recommended that committee members attend the 2003 Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) Training Symposium in March 2003 to discuss issues such as the elimination of the Government Bill of Lading. This event has been CANCELED due to current world events. For the next committee meeting in May, we will coordinate with GSA's Office of Governmentwide Policy to have a policy representative in attendance.

For planning purposes, next year's MTMC Training Symposium will be on March 22-26, 2004 in Denver, Colorado.

BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS DECISION, SHIPMENT OF UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE: Tauna Delmonico, GSA Travel and Transportation Management Division, phone: (703) 605-5607

A recent General Services Board of Contract Appeals (GSBCA) ruling did not provide for payment of Unaccompanied Baggage for an individual traveling from overseas. (To view this case, see <http://www.gsbca.gsa.gov/relo/r1576408.txt>). It appears that GSA legal was not aware of the issue, and therefore, it was not challenged. Although it is not possible to overturn this appeal, GSA attorneys may contact the judge to discuss the issue.

Jim Harte (Office of Governmentwide Policy, Travel Management Division) provided this response:

"I basically agree with the GSBCA decision that there is no authority in the FTR to transport unaccompanied baggage at Government expense. The FTR does not define the term "baggage" but includes a reference to excess baggage in chapter 301-12.

Excess baggage means to me, coats, brief cases, suitcase and similar luggage that accompanies a traveler that is above what can be carried free on common carrier transportation.

Unaccompanied baggage consists of personal clothing, and equipment, essential pots, pans, light housekeeping items, collapsible cribs, playpens, and other articles required for upon arrival in a foreign country or returning to the US from a foreign country to set-up household. This type of baggage is not usually transported on a passenger airline, but shipped as freight.

To allow for the shipment of unaccompanied baggage, the FTR needs to be amended. I will take the necessary action to amend the FTR."

Tauna Delmonico and Larry Tucker met with Jim Harte on February 6, 2003 to discuss this issue. Jim will issue a Relocation Travel Advisory to clarify the current situation while preparing a change to the proposed regulations. We will send out the advisory via the ListServ when it is available.

FUTURE MEETINGS: Mary Anne Sykes, GSA Transportation Programs Branch, phone: (703) 305-7061

Charlie Hill recommended that agencies let GSA know what direction they would like for the committee and any desired changes. Tauna suggested revitalizing Transportation Service Provider (TSP) meetings.

GSA: Do you want to hold elections today for Executive Directors for this committee?

Response: Concur to hold elections at the next meeting in May.

In the meantime, Charlie Hill will act as the Director for Household Goods and Rocky Loewner will act as the Director for Freight.

Surveys were passed out soliciting comments on the future of the Household Goods Relocation and Freight Committee. The next meeting will discuss the results of the survey. GSA is also encouraging more participation from freight representatives.

The GSA Expo will take place in San Antonio, TX, May 6-8, 2003.

For more information, see <http://www.gsa.gov>, click on GSA Expo 2003.

GSA will host federal agencies and Transportation Service Provider meetings during the Expo.

OTHER DISCUSSION TOPICS:

Comment: GSA website is difficult to navigate and time consuming to find information.

Answer: GSA is developing a list of website links and will forward to committee members.

400N

Tauna mentioned that GSA does not have plans to adopt the 400N at this time. Joe Harrison (American Moving and Storage Association) sent some information showing a slight increase in costs. AMSA has also conveyed that if the 400N is modified too much then cost benefits will no longer be achieved. GSA will conduct further research into this issue.

Domestic Delivery Services Schedule

Domestic express services have been expanded to include routine ground service. The solicitation has been posted and GSA is awaiting offers from carriers. After the offers are received, the carriers will be listed on <http://fss.gsa.gov/services/express>.

FUTURE SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

May 15, 2003

Aug 6, 2003

November 5, 2003

ATTENDEES:

Chris Booker	Drug Enforcement Administration
Betty Brown	GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy
Duncan Calcote	U.S. Secret Service
Kim Chancellor	GSA Heartland Region
Tony Cicala	GSA National Capital Region
Tauna Delmonico	GSA Travel and Transportation Management Division
Al Demarcki	Environmental Protection Agency
Jakob Evans	Federal Bureau of Investigation
James Fitzgerald	GSA Audits Division
Bill Fouts	Customs Service
Beatrice Gaither	Social Security Administration
Mathis Gardner	GSA National Capital Region
Carmen Gibbs	US Bankruptcy Courts
Donna Graige	GSA Transportation Programs Branch
Shawn Griffin	State Department
Joe Henle	Veterans Affairs Department
Charles Hill	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
Lynn Ju	GSA Transportation Programs Branch
Connie Lindsay	Federal Aviation Administration
Rocky Loewner	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Ken Martin	Social Security Administration
Norman Mixon	Department of Justice
Les Oden	Department of Interior
Charles Paige	Veterans Affairs Department
Elaine Plotkin	Department of Agriculture
Gracie Poindexter–Turner	U.S. Secret Service
Raymond Price	GSA Transportation Programs Branch
Felicia Rogers	GSA Southeast Sunbelt Region
Mary Anne Sykes	GSA Transportation Programs Branch
Ivan Thomas	Federal Aviation Administration
Brenda Thompson	Federal Aviation Administration
Larry Thompson	Federal Aviation Administration
Jeffrey Thurston	GSA Office of Transportation and Property Management
Darrell Washington	US Geological Survey
John Wheeler	GSA National Capital Region
Alma Wilson	Drug Enforcement Administration
Patricia Woodland	National Archives and Records Administration

TELECONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS:

Robyn Bennett	GSA Heartland Region
Sharon Eckroth	GSA Pacific Rim
Brian Kellhofer	GSA Heartland Region